

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council held at the County Borough Council Offices, The Pavilions, Clydach Vale on Wednesday, 15th March, 2017 at 5.00 p.m.

PRESENT

County Borough Councillor R.Lewis – in the Chair

County Borough Councillors

L.M.Adams	M.Forey	S.Rees
P.Baccara	A.S.Fox	S.Rees-Owen
D.R.Bevan	(Mrs.)E.Hanagan	J.Rosser
H.Boggis	G.E.Hopkins	G.Smith
S.A.Bradwick	P.Howe	R.W.Smith
J.Bunnage	P.Jarman	G.Stacey
P.Cannon,QPM	(Mrs.)S.J.Jones	B.Stephens
S.Carter	(Mrs.)C.Leyshon	G.Thomas
(Mrs.)A.Crimmings	R.B.McDonald	L.G.Walker
W.J.David	C.J.Middle	P.Wasley
A.L.Davies,MBE	A.Morgan	M.Weaver
(Mrs.)A.Davies	B.Morgan	M.Webber
C.Davies	M.A.Norris	E.Webster
G.R.Davies	I.Pearce	C.J.Williams
(Mrs.)M.E.Davies	S.Pickering	D.H.Williams
(Mrs.)L.De Vet	S.Powderhill	T.Williams
J.Elliott	M.J.Powell	C.J.Willis
S.Evans	K.A.Privett	R.Yeo

Officers in Attendance

Mr.C.Bradshaw – Chief Executive
Mr.C.Lee – Group Director, Corporate & Frontline Services
Mr.G.Isingrini – Group Director, Community & Children's Services
Mr.C.B.Jones – Director, Legal & Democratic Services
Mr.T.Wilkins – Director, Human Resources
Mr.C.Hanagan – Director, Cabinet & Public Relations
Ms.K.May – Head of Democratic Services

121 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from County Borough Councillors (Mrs.)T.Bates, A.Calvert, (Mrs.)J.Cass, S.M.Evans-Fear, J.S.James, W.L.Langford, S.Lloyd, R.K.Turner, (Mrs.)J.S.Ward and W.D.Weeks.

122 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

RESOLVED – to note that there were no declarations of personal interests made at the meeting pertaining to the agenda.

123 ANNOUNCEMENTS

- (1) The Mayor announced that a special ceremony was held yesterday (14th March) to bestow the Freedom of the Borough to champion swimmer David Roberts,CBE and The Cory Band. Unfortunately, David Roberts was unable to attend the event as he is now living in Stockholm but was able to accept the award via the live link up Skype. A Special Recognition award was also presented to the County Borough's Paralympic men and women, past and present.

The Mayor wished to place on record his thanks to the staff that worked at the event and also to those that took part in the nomination process.

- (2) County Borough Councillor S.Evans informed Members that an individual living in her ward will be running in the London Marathon to raise money in support of MIND and that an envelope would be circulated during the meeting should Members wish to make donations to this worthwhile cause.

124 PETITION

County Borough Councillor J.Elliott handed a petition to the Mayor on behalf of the residents of Maeshyfryd, Cwmbach asking for the provision of a one-way system in that area.

125 MEMBERS' ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS – RECOGNITION OF SERVICE

The Leader of the Council and the Leaders of the Plaid Cymru, Independents and Democratic Alliance Groups paid tribute to those Members, as listed below who would not be standing in the forthcoming elections in May:-

County Borough Councillors Teresa Bates, Paul Cannon, Joyce Cass, John David, Cennard Davies, Alby Davies,MBE, John Davies, Sylvia Jones, Lionel Langford, Simon Lloyd, Bob McDonald, Keiron Montague, Irene Pearce, Dennis Weeks and Chris Williams.

Those Members that were stepping down and present at the meeting responded to the accolades.

126 MINUTES

RESOLVED – to approve as an accurate record the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on the 1st March, 2017.

127 MEMBERS' QUESTIONS

(a) From County Borough Councillor E.Webster to the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, County Borough Councillor M.A.Norris

“Can you advise whether the alternate use of any of the land or property that the Council has, or intends to dispose of, has created any manufacturing jobs in the County?”

Response from County Borough Councillor M.A.Norris

“Our property portfolio is assessed on a rolling programme, it is a key part to the delivery of efficiencies to protect frontline services. This year we saved £6M in efficiencies. I can advise Members that the review of the property portfolio provides additional income to the Council but does not provide manufacturing jobs. The only one I can think of is Vision Products which is arms length company to the Council, other than that I cannot think of any other manufacturing jobs, our hands have been tied. Until 1999 we had a broad manufacturing base at Coedcae Lane and Gellihirion which were sold by Plaid Cymru which hampered the ability in creating jobs”.

Supplementary Question from County Borough Councillor E.Webster

“My point is that we are losing industrial land, for example, the Chubb site at Maerdy was sold for change of use, most of which was for residential. Are you going to protect our sites in the Upper Rhondda and protect the remaining industrial sites in the Rhondda?”

Response from County Borough Councillor M.A.Norris

“The Chubb site wasn't owned by the Council. It was a Planning issue, which are dealt with on an individual basis. We can't have a policy to say that we are going to deny any planning for housing as we need a mixture which Chubb was”.

(b) From County Borough Councillor T.Williams to the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Equalities and the Welsh Language, County Borough Councillor G.Hopkins

“How does the Council mark LGBT history?”

Response from County Borough Councillor G.Hopkins

“In February, this Council hosted the biggest ever celebrations for LGBT History Month with a range of events in our libraries, performances in our theatres and we flew the rainbow flag. We are going from strength to strength”.

Supplementary Question from County Borough Councillor T.Williams

“Clearly the Council takes this seriously. Another important issue is that of pay, what is the Council doing to ensure equality in its approach to pay?”

Response from County Borough Councillor G.Hopkins

“The Council has done a lot on pay and equality. For several years Councillor Webber and others were involved in the WAVE project and I am also very proud that we are an accredited living wage employer which has benefitted over 3,000 staff – that is the real living wage and not the joking living wage of the UK Government.

Following the Notice of Motion that was considered back last year, this Council also supports the WASPI campaign. There is a range of issues where this Council has played a leading role for its employees”.

- (c) **From County Borough Councillor (Mrs.)A.Davies to the Cabinet Member for Council Business and Human Resources, County Borough Councillor M.Webber**

“Will the Deputy Leader make a statement on the Council’s budget consultation process?”

Response from County Borough Councillor M.Webber

“Over 900 people took part in the consultation process in town centres, roadshows and using the on-line simulator. The Leader of the Council met with representatives of the Older Person’s Advisory Group (OPAG) this afternoon - far more people are now engaged in the process which provides valuable feedback for us in preparing the budget strategy in 2017/18”.

County Borough Councillor (Mrs.)A.Davies did not wish to ask a supplementary question

- (d) **From County Borough Councillor (Mrs.)J.S.Ward to the Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Tourism and Planning, County Borough Councillor R.Bevan**

“How will the Taff Vale Development impact on the County Borough as a whole?”

Note: As County Borough Councillor (Mrs.)J.S.Ward had submitted her apologies for absence at this meeting, the question was not responded to.

- (e) **From County Borough Councillor G.Smith to the Leader of the Council, County Borough Councillor A.Morgan**

“Will the Leader make a statement on investment across the County Borough?”

Response from County Borough Councillor A.Morgan

“This time last year a decision was taken regarding treasury management where we released ear marked reserves. We have committed funding to visible services. Over the last two years we have upgraded up to 50 play areas and there is £750,000 committed for the year ahead. Three new 3G facilities have been provided at Abercynon, Maerdy and Church Village.

As far as infrastructure is concerned, we have trebled our highways budget over the past three years which has been spent on, for example, the Rhigos Mountain Road, replacing bridges etc.

We have allocated a further £2M to the schools budget.

These are just a few areas that we have invested money and hopefully that will continue.”

Supplementary Question from County Borough Councillor G.Smith

“The level of investment being delivered is fantastic and is having positive impact. Work has now started on the new lower school in my area. Future investment in 3G, can the Leader give assurances that a 3G pitch in Porth is to be considered?”

Response from County Borough Councillor A.Morgan

“We are providing 3G pitches on a number of sites and Officers are looking at various funding opportunities for one in Porth. Regarding investment in Porth, there has been a considerable amount, last year saw the delivery of park and ride facilities and further £0.5M to extend that”.

REPORTS OF THE GROUP DIRECTOR, CORPORATE & FRONTLINE SERVICES

128 TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY INCORPORATING INVESTMENT STRATEGY, PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS AND MRP STATEMENT FOR 2017/18

In his report, the Group Director, Corporate & Frontline Services set out details of the following for the Council’s consideration:

- Treasury Management Strategy for 2017/18
- Investment Strategy for 2017/18
- Prudential and Treasury Indicators for 2015/16 (actual to date) and 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20; and
- Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy Statement

and following consideration thereof, it was **RESOLVED** –

1. To approve the Treasury Management Strategy, Investment Strategy, Prudential and Treasury Indicators as set out in the report;
2. To grant the Section 151 Officer (or in his absence the Deputy Section 151 Officer) with delegated powers to exceed the fixed/variable limits. In the best financial interests of the Authority only, and if utilised, that this be reported to the next available meeting of Council (as set out in paragraph 18.6 of the report).

129 ALL WALES PENSION FUND INVESTMENT POOLING – JOINT GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE AND INTER AUTHORITY AGREEMENT

In his report, the Group Director, Corporate & Frontline Services provided Members with proposals to establish a Joint Governance Committee (`JGC`), which will oversee the pooling of the investments of the eight Local Government Pension Scheme (`LGPS`) funds in Wales. The report also provided details of the draft Inter Authority Agreement (`IAA`) which the constituent authorities (in their capacity as LGPS administrators) are in the process of agreeing and which would formally establish the JGC.

Following consideration of the proposals as outlined in the report, it was **RESOLVED –**

1. To note the content of the draft Inter Authority Agreement (`IAA`) attached to the report at Appendix 1 and that delegated authority be given to the Group Director, Corporate & Frontline Services in consultation with the Chair of the Council's Pension Fund Committee and the Director, Legal & Democratic Services to approve and sign the final version of the IAA;
2. To approve the establishment of a Joint Committee (hereinafter referred to as the Joint Governance Committee (`JGC`)) on completion of the IAA referred to in 1 above, and on the basis of the terms of reference set out in the report;
3. To delegate the exercise of certain functions to the Joint Governance Committee as set out in the IAA and to note those matters that are reserved to Council;
4. To approve the appointment of the Chair of the Pension Fund Committee and his/her nominated deputy to the JGC as the Council's representative;
5. To approve the appointment of Carmarthenshire County Council (Dyfed Pension Fund) to act as the Host Council with the responsibilities set out in the IAA; and
6. To delegate authority to the Group Director, Corporate & Frontline Services in consultation with the Director, Legal & Democratic Services to agree any further minor amendments to the IAA.

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR, LEGAL & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

130 WELSH GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION – WHITE PAPER ‘REFORMING LOCAL GOVERNMENT: RESILIENT AND RENEWED’

Pursuant to Minute No.118 of the Council Meeting held on the 1st March, 2017, the Director, Legal & Democratic Services set out the views of the Working Group following its meeting held on the 6th March, 2017, in respect of the above consultation document of the Welsh Government.

Following a discussion, it was **RESOLVED –**

1. That the comments of the Members of the Working Group as outlined in the report, subject to the deletion of paragraph 4.12.1 be submitted to the Welsh Government by the deadline of the 11th April, 2017 as the Council’s response;
2. That Members be invited to respond directly to the proposals contained within the White Paper on matters of specific detail thereby reflecting their individual views.

131 NOTICE OF MOTION

The following Notice of Motion standing in the names of County Borough Councillors G.Thomas, C.Leyshon, L.M.Adams, (Mrs.)T.Bates, R.Bevan, H.Boggis, J.Bonetto, S.Bradwick, J.Bunnage, A.Calvert, P.Cannon, S.Carter, (Mrs.)J.Cass, A.Crimmings, W.J.David, A.Davies, MBE, (Mrs.)A.Davies, J.Davies, (Mrs.)M.E.Davies, L.De Vet, J.Elliott, S.Evans, M.Forey, A.S.Fox, M.Griffiths, P.Griffiths, (Mrs.)E.Hanagan, G.Holmes, G.Hopkins, (Mrs.)S.Jones, W.L.Langfrod, R.Lewis, S.Lloyd, R.B.McDonald, C.Middle, K.Montague, A.Morgan, B.Morgan, M.A.Norris, S.Pickering, S.Powderhill, K.Privett, S.Rees, (Mrs.)A.Roberts, J.Rosser, G.Smith, R.Smith, G.Staceh, B.Stephens, M.Tegg, R.K.Turner, (Mrs.)J.S.Ward, M.J.Watts, M.Webber, D.Weeks, C.Williams, D.Williams T.Williams, C.J.Willis and R.Yeo was considered:-

“This Council requests officers to bring forward a report identifying areas of Rhondda Cynon Taf suffering from poor digital connectivity, namely 3G and 4G mobile phone signal as well as Super Fast Broadband.

In today’s modern world, residents and businesses within RCT both need and expect good quality digital connectivity. In identifying the “Not Spots” this Council will make representations to the service providers to enhance the provision within the County Borough”

RESOLVED – to adopt the Notice of Motion.

132 **FOR INFORMATION**
URGENT KEY OFFICER DELEGATED DECISIONS
EXCLUDED FROM “CALL-IN”

RESOLVED – to note for information the following three Key Officer Delegated Decisions which were excluded from “Call-In”:-

- Party Ponty Funding 2017-19
- Application for Funding for a Capital Development Grant to The Museums, Archives and Libraries Division (with the permission of the Mayor this decision was reported verbally at the meeting by the Director, Cabinet & Public Relations)
- The Communities First Programme (with the permission of the Mayor this decision was reported verbally at the meeting by the Director, Cabinet & Public Relations)

R.LEWIS
MAYOR

The meeting closed at 6.45 p.m.